Chapter IX

Human Services

The Wallingford Neighborhood Plan covers facilities not always included in the Human Services constellation, such as the Boys and Girls Club, day care, churches, and education of all types. This was a conscious decision on the part of the Human Services work group, which even changed its name from "Social" to "Human" Services in order to reflect this more inclusive approach. Wallingford is lucky to have human service providers such as the Wallingford Senior Center, the Good Shepherd Center, the 45th Street Clinic, and the Access project, which have shown strong support for and involvement in the neighborhood.

On occasion, however, the siting of a human service facility in Wallingford has provoked neighborhood discontent over the location and/ or scale of the building and its traffic impacts, as well as concern about potential service populations. Such issues have tested the good will of neighbors and providers alike

Planning Background

The Neighborhood Plan attempts to deal in specific ways with recent siting controversies, while developing a new model of neighborhood-integrated human services that formally links neighborhood volunteers with local needs through the WEaving Wallingford project (see Chapter VIII),

Through community surveys, inventories, and a series of neighborhood/provider roundtables, the Human Services element was fashioned as a series of consensus strategies that will better integrate human services into the life of the community.

Another goal of the Human Services work group was to develop a plan for siting and delivering human services based upon an inventory of existing programs, an assessment of current and future needs, and a neighborhood discussion of these issues, Since work group members were predominantly human service providers, joint meetings with the Community Building work group were instituted to get alternative perspectives.

The Human Services work group began by taking an inventory of all services and attempting to measure human needs within Wallingford. This process led to an understanding that ALL the organizations providing human services in Wallingford – churches, schools, day care centers, special needs housing, social service agencies, etc. - along with neighborhood volunteers, could be brought together in a network that would provide a full spectrum of service.

Finally, it was recognized that at the heart of life in Wallingford there must be a spirit of neighbors -- residents, businesses, schools, and human services -- caring for one another and looking to the good of the whole community.

After evaluating community concerns, the City's "Good Neighbor" policy, and the suggestions of providers, the Human Services work group recommended developing a network of human service providers, linked with community organizations through the WEaving Wallingford project. The work group felt the existing siting process for new human services did not produce successful results for anybody involved. To amend this, the Plan has designed an improved siting notification process that is fair to all parties.

HS- 1: A New Human Services Paradigm

> Implement a new paradigm for human services in Wallingford that is closely attuned to the neighborhood's internal needs and resources, yet recognizes the needs of the larger community.

The Wallingford Human Services Network is envisioned as a coalition of human service providers operating in the neighborhood, linked together by common planning, information, and funding/service strategies. In addition, it will be linked to the WEaving Wallingford project and will gather strength from ties to community organizations, volunteers, and a central staffing/information resource. The following are key milestones along the way to a self-sustaining level within three years:

HS- 1.1: Create a Wallingford Human Services Network

> The Network will bring together individuals from all the neighborhood service providers in order to coordinate plans, share ideas, and maximize use of resources by identifying service gaps and redundancies. The Plan proposes the following actions be implemented over the next three years:

1.1.1   Years 1 and 2: Create a complete inventory of all human services in Wallingford; share it with other providers; make it publicly accessible; and update it quarterly.

1.1.2   Years 1 and 2: Use the inventory to identify service gaps, duplication, and saturation.

1.1.3   Year 2: Develop a coordinated human services plan for all providers within Wallingford (serving local residents and/or regional populations).

1.1.4   Year 3 Develop a joint fundraising and service provision strategy, linking with local volunteer and client bases to continue to maximize use of resources,

HS- 1.2 Link the network to WEaving Wallingford

> Link the Human Services Network with the general community to forma fully integrated user/community/provider system. WEaving Wallingford will provide the structure and impetus for integrating these different constituencies.

HS-1.3: Link service providers with community volunteers and activities

1.3.1   Use WEaving Wallingford to help link the assets of the community, such as volunteers, with the assets of providers and clients. Develop a seamless community support system for human service clients. This becomes increasingly important as clients no longer need

specific neighborhood services but still wish to be integrated into community life — and to contribute to it.

1.3.2   Develop a barter system, similar to Fremont Time or Ithaca Dollars, in which services can be traded directly; this helps bring neighbors together by matching individual needs with resources and skills.

What is needed from the city:

Year One:

. Provide seed grant money ($25,000) to develop a work plan and schedule for jointly building the Human Services Network and WEaving Wallingford.

. Revise city department procedures to establish WEaving Wallingford and the Human Services Network as the contact/information point for DHHS and new providers.

• Develop and publish accurate inventory information regarding human services -- government, non-profit, and private (including special needs housing).

Year Two:

. Assist or partner in procuring grant moneys from foundations or government sources.

. Provide grant money for information hot line and other special projects of WEaving Wallingford related to improving the human services network.

. Revise City human services siting policy to establish a Wallingford siting process and review.

Year Three:

. Base DHHS and other City Department funding decisions, at least in part, on Network needs and recommendations,

. Help link Human Services Network to state. and federal resources.

What is needed from local providers and the community:

Year One:

. Establish WEaving Wallingford -- its information networks and physical location.

. Strategize *with* WEaving Wallingford to develop a work plan and meeting schedule for the Human Services Network,

. Take first steps to organize the Human Services Network, including developing a scope of work.

• Meet regularly with WEaving Wallingford to identify community/business concerns and share information.

• Assist in obtaining long-term funding and grants to build WEaving Wallingford and the Human Services Network concurrently.

Year Two:

- Implement cooperative special projects, such as the inventory of resources and the identification of gaps and redundancies.

- Develop and institute with WEaving Wallingford a model for liking the community (including businesses) to service providers and clients, and for clients/providers to contribute their talents to the community.

- Implement new siting policy; begin joint human services planning.

Year Three:

. Continue building the strength of the Network through joint human services funding and by linking with volunteers and community-based organizations.

- Assess progress toward the Network's goals and define improvements based on early operations and community feedback.

- Include WEaving Wallingford in funding considerations and develop joint volunteer projects to improve the community.

HS-2: A New Human Services Siting Protocol

Institute a new siting protocol for human service provider facilities that encourages early communication/notification and meaningful participation by Wallingford residents in the siting of human service facilities.

All new providers proposing human service facilities in Wallingford, whether or not City-funded, would begin their application with a peer review before the Human Services Network. After the Network issued findings on such things as the need for the service and expected operational success of the provider, a community process closely based on the "Good Neighbor" guidelines would begin. Good Neighbor guidelines are designed to establish clear communication, achieve prompt resolutions of concerns, and create a foundation for community support based on mutual trust, confidence and respect. In the proposed Wallingford siting protocol, a combination of peer and community review would produce a set of recommendations for DCLU. While the final decision would be made by the director, these recommendations could be made enforceable by mitigation standards mandated by DCLU. Enforcement should be rigorous.

HS-2.1: Give the community more advance knowledge and control over siting.

Authorize a local siting protocol for new service providers, administered by DCLU and modeled on the city's current "Good Neighbor" siting guidelines, that gives Wallingford residents more advance knowledge and control over questions of program and siting

HS-2.2: Expand community notification requirements currently included in the Good Neighbor Siting Policies to include all new human services providers (not just those that are City-funded).

HS-2.3: Institute a "peer review" panel to review operations of potential new providers,

The Human Services Network will convene a peer review panel to review new service providers. The goal will be to identify ways providers can work more effectively for their own organizations and with the community.

Wallingford Human Services Siting Process: Preliminary Proposal

The Human Services siting process is not intended to recruit or encourage more human services for the community; rather, it is an attempt to respond to proposals and projects in a manner that ensures more successful outcomes. Several Wallingford organizations would be involved with siting issues:

. **WEaving Wallingford,** an organization comprised mostly of volunteers, will be the first contact. They will introduce proponents of new services to the key neighborhood players, arrange for meeting spaces, publicize public meetings, and provide facilitators if needed

. **Wallingford** Human Services Network, composed of representatives from local churches, schools, and social service agencies, will give proponents of new services insight into existing services and gaps, alert them to key concerns of the community, and mentor them through the notification process. They will also be charged with peer review of human service providers (see HS-2.3 above).

. The **Wallingford** Community Council and Chamber of Commerce, which deal with most land use and siting issues in the neighborhood, will help proponents of new services schedule public meetings and receive public input. They will also approve or oppose the siting, and convene an advisory committee.

Plan of Participation A first step toward successful siting in Wallingford is the development of a "Plan of Participation." In this written plan, proponents of new services will be asked to:

• Understand Neighborhood Expectation% Proponents will be asked to review Guidelines for a Notification Process (Good Neighbor Policy), prepared by DHHS and the Department of Neighborhoods (DON), and to understand local interpretation.

• Meet with Human Services **Peers:** Peer review by the. Wallingford Human Services Network will be conducted to help, each party understand the other.

• Talk to the Community Council: Proponents will discuss detailed plans and the review and recommendation process with the Wallingford Community Council and the Chamber of Commerce and other organizations if necessary.

Community Notification and Discussion With the help of the Community Council and WEaving Wallingford, proponents of new services would notify the nearest neighbors and the wider Wallingford community, arranging for full and open conversation about programs and siting. The goals are to:

• Understand Neighbors **Concerns:** Proponents of new services will be asked to hold neighborhood meetings to educate residents and discuss the project. WEaving Wallingford will provide facilitators if necessary. Proponents will be asked to prepare carefully with regard to policy & procedures and prior neighborhood experiences with the type of program being proposed. A good understanding of neighbors' concerns is expected to enhance thoughtful discussion and responses.

- Create a Link with the Neighborhood. Proponents of new services would be urged to become active in the Human Services Network which, together with WEaving Wallingford, will help devise ways to include community resources in new programs to be sited here.

- Demonstrate Responsiveness to Neighborhood Concern% Proponents of new services would be asked to consider proposing services and programs offered specifically for the neighborhood's direct benefit.

Review and Revision Proponents of new services would meet again with Wallingford Community Council to review responses from the immediate neighborhood and wider community and revise plans for siting and community participation if necessary,

Recommendation: The immediate neighborhood and the Community Council will prepare a recommendation for one of the following

a) *Approval.*

b) *Approval with modification and mitigations,*

c) *Opposition for reasons such as public policy, law, zoning, etc.*

Evaluation

The Community Council will convene a Good Neighbor Advisory Board for projects to allow ongoing community evaluation, mediation, and mitigation of any problems or concerns. This Board will continue as the vehicle for direct provider/community communication as long as necessary.